

# Team Primacy Concept (TPC) Based Employee Evaluation and Job Performance

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*This qualitative study explored how employees learn from Team Primacy Concept (TPC) based employee evaluation and how they use the feedback in performing their jobs. TPC based evaluation is a form of multirater evaluation, during which the employee's performance is discussed by one's peers in a face-to-face team setting. The study used Kolb's learning model to describe employees' learning from evaluation. The findings suggest that such evaluation plays a positive role in facilitating employees' performance.*

Keyword: Multirater Evaluation, Kolb's Learning Model, Employee Performance

The purpose of the study was to explore how employees learn from Team Primacy Concept (TPC) based employee evaluation to improve their job performance. TPC based evaluation is a form of 360 degree, or multirater evaluation that consists of three components: self-feedback, supervisor's feedback, and peer feedback. The main difference between TPC based evaluation and other forms of multirater evaluations is that during the TPC based evaluation the employee's professional performance is discussed by his or her peers in a face-to-face team setting, while other forms of 360 degree evaluation are conducted in a confidential and anonymous manner. Although 360 degree evaluation has been found to be generally effective in employee performance (Edwards & Ewen, 1996; Pollack & Pollack, 1996), very limited research has been conducted on open employee evaluations involving teams.

## Background and Statement of the Problem

In the late 1800's, the typical workplace was characterized by autocratic authority, and supervisory feedback was "random, harsh, and primarily focused on level of output" (Rogers, Rogers, & Metlay, 2002). After the Second World War, more focus was turned to employee's motivation and job satisfaction, and regular performance reviews between supervisor and employee became the norm. In the midst of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, organizations streamlined structures to become more competitive, which in turn created a larger number of direct reports for each manager, and less time for a manager to observe each report. Therefore, employees were expected to work as teams, communicating more and relying more on each other to get the job done. These flattened hierarchies started undermining the reliability of traditional supervisor-employee evaluations and highlighted the relevance of peer feedback (Rogers et al., 2002). Evaluation from different raters (supervisor, peers, direct reports, and internal and external customers) became popular in the 1980's, and gained the name of 360 degree or "multirater" evaluation (McCarthy & Garavan, 2001). Terms used to describe 360 degree feedback include "full-circle appraisal", "multirater feedback", and "multisource assessment". Today, major corporations such as Bank of America, Disney, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, and Motorola use 360 degree system for evaluating employees (Strom, Strom, & Moore, 1999).

Multirater evaluation has different forms. Team Primacy Concept (TPC) based employee evaluation is a form of multirater evaluation. The distinguishing characteristic of the TPC employee evaluation is that the feedback is given to an employee in a face-to-face manner, with all the team members present. This approach differs from 360 degree evaluation where peers and supervisor provide feedback to an employee in a confidential and anonymous way using "paper and pencil format" or a customized software programs (McCarthy & Garavan, 2001).

In TPC based employee evaluation the team plays an important role in the process of providing peer feedback. Lawler, Mohrman, and Ledford (1995) found that 67% of all Fortune 1000 firms use the team approach in their organizations for production, quality assurance, and other functions. Similarly, Wellins, Byham, and Wilson (1991) found that 37% of organizations that implement self-empowered teams utilize them for employee evaluations.

Thus, teams are a popular and still growing form of employee involvement. They are used in organizations for production, quality assurance, and employee evaluations. Although 360 degree evaluation has been found to be

generally effective in employee performance (Edwards & Ewen, 1996; Pollack & Pollack, 1996), very little research has been done that explores the role of face-to-face team evaluation in employee's job performance.

## **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework is defined by (a) TPC based employee evaluation, and (b) Kolb's learning model.

### *TPC Based Employee Evaluation*

TPC based employee evaluation originated from Garner's (1988) Total Team Model. The Total Team Model provides a conceptual framework to organize interdisciplinary groups of human services professionals for peer supervision and promotes collective responsibility for professional growth and clients' total well-being. Organizations that apply the Total Team Model use team processes to perform many organizational functions, including team evaluations (Garner, 1988).

The Institute for Family Centered Services (IFCS) has utilized Garner's model in the development and implementation of TPC based employee evaluation. During the evaluation process, an employee first develops a list of self-perceived strengths and challenges in the core job areas. Then, the employee meets with each team member individually to discuss the team member's feedback on the strengths and weaknesses in the core performance areas. Next, all team members share their feedback at a team meeting with everyone being present. Afterwards, the employee meets with the supervisor to discuss the supervisor's feedback. Finally, the employee prepares a performance improvement plan based on self-, peer, and supervisor evaluation (Painter & Smith, 2004).

In 2004 IFCS implemented a major change in the TPC based evaluation process. Prior to 2004, employees evaluated themselves and each other in the four core performance areas – documentation, collateral relationships, clinical work with families, and teamwork. However, at that time Family Centered Specialists (FCS's - the front line employees of IFCS) did not have a specific list of skills for each of the core areas. Evaluation was more "fluid", and many times FCS's were evaluated based on their personality features (such as "friendly", "easygoing with team members") as well as their job performance. In 2004 FCS's evaluation guide was developed and implemented to make the process more focused on specific job skills and less on general personality traits.

### *Kolb's Learning Model*

This study used Kolb's (1974) learning model as a conceptual framework to discover what role TPC based evaluation plays in employee's performance. Kolb's model, also referred to as the "learning cycle," explains the process by which individuals and organizations attend to their experiences, understand them, and consequently modify their behaviors (Kolb, 1974). The learning cycle includes four elements: concrete experience, reflective observation, conceptualization, and active experimentation.

*Concrete experience* is described by Kolb as "feeling and sensing", and it involves perception of information in an actual situation. Therefore, one aspect of the study explored how employees experience the evaluation process and how they perceive the feedback received during evaluation. *Reflective observation* means reflecting on how the experience impacts some aspects of individual's life. For this study, reflective observation entailed an exploration of the meaning that employees assigned to the received feedback. *Conceptualization*, according to Kolb, is a process during which an individual interprets the events and tries to understand them. This study examined how employees planned to use the feedback to make necessary changes for performance improvement. Finally, *active experimentation* is implementing and testing concepts in new situations. For "active experimentation", this study explored how employees implemented their performance improvement goals, outlined in their developmental plans.

## **Research Questions and Methodology**

The study used Kolb's learning model as the conceptual framework, thus the basic and subsidiary research questions were based on "learning" concept as defined by Kolb. He believed that "learning" embraces (a) concrete experience, (b) reflection, (c) conceptualization, and (d) acting. Therefore, the basic research question that guided the study was: "How do employees learn from TPC evaluation to improve their job performance?" The subsidiary research questions were (a) "How do employees experience TPC feedback from self, supervisor, and peers?", (b) "How do employees reflect on the feedback?", (c) "How do employees plan for changes to their work behaviors?", and (d) "How do employees implement self, supervisory, and peer feedback in performing their jobs?".

A qualitative case study approach was utilized to explore employees' experiences of TPC evaluation, the knowledge gained from the encounters, and application of knowledge to enhance job performance. The case for the study was the Southeastern Virginia Region of the Institute for Family Centered Services (IFCS). IFCS is a multi-

site organization that provides home-based, family centered counseling to at-risk children and families. It was established in 1988 and is located in 4 states throughout the United States. This organization was chosen because it has been continuously applying TPC based evaluation for all front line and supervisory level employee teams for 18 years. Additionally, it has a history of outstanding organizational performance in the mental health industry.

Within the organization, the Southeastern Virginia (SEVA) region was purposely chosen for the study as it is the best performing region based on the four core competencies: clinical work, documentation, collateral relationships and teamwork. The rationale for purposive sampling was to select a sample from which most can be learned by identifying criteria that are essential (Merriam, 1998). The best performing IFCS region was chosen so that the organization as a whole could benefit from the experiences and practices that contributed to that region's success. The cases study design was chosen for two main reasons. First, the study researched the process during which learning occurs, specifically the study focused on employees' experiences, reflection, planning, and action. The case study is a particularly suitable design for researching a process (Merriam, 1998). Secondly, the study focused on a bounded unit, which was SEVA region. The study participants were performing their jobs in the same environment, had similar job expectations, and had relationships with each other. Case studies differ from other types of qualitative research because they are descriptions and analysis of "a single entity around which there are boundaries" (Merriam, 1998, p.27). Thus, a case study was the most suitable research design.

The participants were employees of SEVA region who had at least two TPC based evaluations during their work history with IFCS. The criterion of having at least two evaluations was significant because the developmental plans of subsequent evaluations were reviewed to determine if employees had been successful in implementing their previous goals. Eight employees participated in the study with pseudonyms: Joann, Hattie, Sandcofa, Julie, Queen Esther, Laufey, Serena and Wenrobe. The participants included 7 females and 1 male. Their length of employment with IFCS ranged from 1 year and 3 months to 16 years and 5 months; thus the number of evaluations that members have experienced ranged from 2 to 12. Six participants were African-Americans and 2 participants were Caucasians.

#### *Data Collection and Analysis*

Data for the study were collected through interviewing and the analysis of employee development plans. The interviews were semi-structured and lasted for about an hour. We developed the qualitative interview guide based on the research questions. For instance, to explore how employees experience feedback given by peers, the guide contained question such as, "What feelings did you experience during team evaluation when you heard about your challenges in clinical performance area from your peers?". Then, the consecutive development plans were compared to determine how the employee changed work performance from one annual evaluation to another. Also, the review of the plans focused on finding relational patterns with the interview data. NVivo7 qualitative research software was used to analyze and manage the data. Following the initial coding, we retrieved and critically reviewed 66 "nodes" and compared each unit with another looking for recurring regularities. Then, we grouped the units and created the major themes of the study. A theme was decided either by a number of participants that agreed on the theme, or by uniqueness of the information (Merriam, 1998). Consequently, the themes were identified under four key findings of the study: experiences of TPC evaluation, reflection, planning, and implementing feedback in one's performance.

#### *Limitations of the Study*

The results of this case study were limited to data gathering and analysis from one region of one organization. Therefore, one should be careful not to generalize the findings to other settings or organizations. This qualitative study describes how employees learn from TPC evaluation as it relates to their job performance: it does not intend to determine the degree of correlative relationship between TPC evaluation and employee performance. Similarly, the study did not intend to determine whether TPC employee evaluation is more or less effective in promoting employee performance than other forms of employee evaluations.

### **Findings**

The study described the process of how employees learn from TPC based employee evaluation in their job performance. We have organized the findings around Kolb's learning model – experience, reflection, conceptualization, and acting – and highlighted the themes supporting these key findings.

#### *Experiences of TPC Employee Evaluation*

The findings suggest that the TPC based process of evaluation is anxiety producing for most employees, specifically the team evaluation aspect of the process. Also, preparation appears to be an important component of TPC based evaluation, as participants have acknowledged the importance of adhering to the individual meetings before the team evaluation meeting. Non-adherence to this component causes a conflict between the evaluator and

the feedback receiver. Then, the participants clearly identified that honesty of a peer who delivers feedback and openness by a recipient are essential to successful TPC evaluation. Most participants hold the view that TPC feedback is as honest as feedback delivered in a confidential and anonymous way. Also, the positive feedback delivered in a team setting makes team members feeling appreciated and acknowledged. Further, feedback of a more senior member was perceived as having more weight than a feedback of a novice. Finally, study participants perceived that an updated evaluation format, which was implemented in 2004 is lacking “a holistic” component.

*Preparation before evaluation.* A strong theme that emerged was preparation for TPC based evaluation, especially for a component where an employee gets evaluated by all team members. Two sub-themes emerged that highlighted preparation: (1) an individual meeting with a peer, and (2) honest self-evaluation.

Participants thought that an individual meeting with a peer before team evaluation is a significant component as it allows knowing beforehand what the peer is going to share later with other team members. Therefore, it helps to avoid negative setbacks. The individual meeting also allows clarifying and discussing perceptions of both feedback giver and feedback receiver. Also, several participants, like Julie, shared their thought process of looking deep within themselves and identifying strengths and challenges while preparing for team evaluation. For instance, Julie noted, “As I prepare for evaluations, I focus on the challenges that I’m going to present and I’ve always taken the stand on being upfront about my challenges rather than being self-conscious”.

*Anxiety before and during TPC evaluation.* The participants noted experiencing some initial anxiety before the team evaluation. None of them, however, experienced an overwhelming anxiety or fear. Laufey shared:

Because of the concept and the philosophy of how IFCS does evaluations, even if you have things you have to work on, you don’t go into it with like your nerves are on edge or you have a lot of anxiety about it. I just take everything in a positive light. I didn’t take it in a condescending way.

It also appears that the employees who have been with IFCS for one year or less experience more anxiety before their first evaluations. Employees who had already experienced several team evaluations described little or no anxiety during the team evaluation process. As Joann shared,

My second one experienced probably less [anxiety], but after that no more anxiety. You actually start looking forward to them because it’s your time to get your plans, your goals for that upcoming year on what you need to work on or what you’re good at, and you go off on those and continue to work.

Laufey also noted that following her one-year evaluation “I wasn’t as nervous because I knew what to expect”.

*Conflict among team members.* Three of participants interviewed – Sandcofa, Hattie, and Wenronbe described experiences of a conflict during team evaluation. All three conflict experiences occurred when participants received a feedback which was negatively surprising, and which was not delivered to them during individual meeting with a peer prior to the team evaluation. This theme relates to the previous significant theme of “preparation before evaluation”. It appeared that a lack of preparation and a lack of open and honest feedback from individual team members prior to the team meeting cause conflict in the team. In Hattie’s case, she received feedback from a peer during team meeting, which was never delivered to her in an individual meeting. Hattie and her peer disagreed; the anxiety in the team was getting higher. Thus, they had to stop the team and process the conflict situation. Hattie thought that this conflict during the face-to-face evaluation could have been avoided if the peer had brought his or her perceptions about Hattie’s challenges during their individual conversation, before the team evaluation. Similarly, Sandcofa and Wenronbe shared that the conflict experiences were caused by their peer describing a challenge in a team meeting which was not brought to their attention beforehand. All three participants described their feelings as of anger, frustration, and confusion. Sandcofa noted, “I was shocked and confused. I was offended”.

*Honesty and openness.* The study participants referred to (1) honesty providing feedback and (2) openness to hearing challenges as to significant prerequisites to TPC evaluation process. For instance, Hattie noted, “It doesn’t help you to develop professionally if your team members are not open and honest with you and do not give you the challenges that they see that you need to work on”.

As TPC employee evaluation includes a unique component of an employee being evaluated by his or her peers in a team setting, the study explored with participants what role this component plays in their evaluation, and how it would be different if peer feedback was delivered to them in a confidential and anonymous way. Participants thought that in regards to information provided, the feedback would not be different if it was delivered in a confidential or anonymous way. However, they agreed that if the feedback was confidential and anonymous, it would undermine the philosophy of openness within the team. Additionally, a feedback receiver would not get a chance to receive suggestions from a team member on how she or he could improve performance. Laufey noted,

And if I don’t give you my name, then you don’t have anyone to turn to ask, “Well, what exactly is it that you feel that way? Why do you feel like that’s a challenge for me, or why do you feel like that’s a strength for me?” If everyone is anonymous then all you’re going to have is just anonymous checklist at the end and who – who are you going to follow up with for feedback?

IFCS is applying TPC based evaluation not only for developmental, but also for administrative purposes. That means that peer feedback may be used by a supervisor to inform his or her decisions for salary raises and promotions. Some literature sources strongly advise against the application of any kind of 360 degree evaluation for administrative purposes. For instance, Edwards and Ewen (1996) believe that if used for administrative purposes, feedback given by peers would be less honest, and it would cause defensiveness on recipient's part. Polack and Polack (1996) also state that if used for administrative purposes feedback would be more lenient and less reliable. Thus, the study explored with the participants if they would provide and receive feedback differently if TPC evaluation would not impact their salary increases and promotions. The participants identified that it would not play any role – they still would provide feedback with the same level of honesty and openness.

*Appreciation and acknowledgement.* Participants noted that they felt noticed and appreciated by both their peers and their supervisor as a result of the evaluation process. The feeling of appreciation was more significant when it came from a peer. Hattie shared,

I felt really good. I felt happy because a lot of the feedback was related to me being a leader and how they look up to me and know that whether it's critical or not, that I'll give them the feedback that they need to be a better person or to make this job better.... Wow, I thought, wow, they really appreciate me and they really see, how much effort and how much sacrifice I give and how dedicated I am to this job.

*Seniority of team members.* The findings suggest that the longer one has been on the job, the more valuable one's feedback is perceived by team members. Novice members identified that senior team members can provide them with more valuable performance feedback, as they have more experience with IFCS. Serena, who has been employed by IFCS for just over the year noted,

They have a lot to pull from and a lot to draw on. Whereas for me, this may be my first resistant family, whereas they're looking saying, "I've had so many resistant families." So, I really can look up to them and respect what their experience is, and that is extremely helpful when you have an FCS who has been doing this for seven years...

This finding is significant as it revealed the differences in perceptions between more novice and more senior team members as to the reasons of why novices' feedback was perceived to be less valuable than feedback of senior members. Novices tend to provide with more superficial feedback, because either they feel that they do have enough contextual information, or are intimidated by seniority of their fellow team members; while more senior members perceive that novices choose to "opt out" even though they could provide with more critical feedback.

*Lack of holistic approach.* In 2004 the TPC evaluation process was adapted to be more specific based on FCS's job description skills rather than general behaviors and personality traits. The study revealed that the change appeared significant for employees. Most participants interviewed, and especially the more senior employees, thought that the change had a more negative than positive highlight on TPC based evaluation, especially the team evaluation component. While the new format appeared to be more skills specific and brought in some structure, it took away the more personal and relationships-oriented component. The more holistic nature of evaluation was perceived by the study participants to be lacking. The new evaluation format feels more like "by the book". As Wenronbe noted,

With the new process, you have to say specifics to the things that in the book, whereas in the old process, your team members were able to give you what they felt were your strengths and challenges as they saw it and it incorporated personal as well as work-related part. I'm missing the more personal part.

### *Reflection on TPC Feedback*

The study has identified several themes that show how the employees reflect on feedback, namely filtering challenges or negative feedback, (b) using situation as trigger for reflection, and (c) reflecting on one's performance while evaluating others.

*Filtering challenges or negative feedback.* The findings suggest that employees filter feedback that highlights the challenges. The challenges identified by peers or supervisor may be different from those identified by employee. Rather than dismiss the feedback information, the employee would think about it, or "sleep on it" (as Julie described), or "marinate it" (as Wenronbe described). They would dismiss a challenge when it totally contradicts their perceptions, or they would take it and see which pieces fit their perceptions. Like Joann noted, "If I heard it in evaluation and I thought that it was not a challenge, I definitely would process it after the fact and -- and see which pieces of it that I'm not seeing. So, yeah, I will process it later. But I think I will take my time and process it later just to see what pieces of it I'm not seeing".

*The situation as a trigger for reflection.* Most of participants interviewed shared that they would usually recall peer or supervisory feedback when they encounter a specific challenging situation. A few participants specifically

identified clinical situations with client families as trigger events highlighting internalized feedback. For Joann, it could be “a keyword” or “the reaction of a person”.

*Reflection on one's performance by evaluating others.* A few of the participants identified that participation in team evaluations of other team members facilitates reflection on their own job performance. By hearing team member's challenges in a particular area, it actually triggers reflection for one's performance. As Joann noted,

When you're hearing other people's challenges - or when you giving someone challenges, it is also reflection of you, too. You may see that this person needs to turn in their notes in more on time, more often than they do, and so it may be something that you yourself are working on. So, it may just be a reflection. So, I think it helps you as well as the person you're giving information for just hearing his strengths and challenges.

#### *Planning for an Action*

The study has identified three themes in the process of conceptualizing and planning after TPC based employee evaluation: developing meaningful goals, making conscious effort, and utilizing deadlines for task completion.

*Developing meaningful goals.* Employees develop their goals based on internalized feedback that appears meaningful to them regardless the source – peer or supervisory. However, most employees interviewed, noted that the supervisor's input appears to be more important than peer input in writing the goals for development. For instance, Julie noted, “When I go over it with supervisor, I feel, because she is in a supervisory position over me, that something is maybe more imminent, because she makes it a priority”.

*Making conscious effort.* The employees described how they make a conscious effort to improve their performance. For Sandcofa, the conscious effort to perform better was based on the tendency to avoid a negative feedback and to seek for more positive feedback in the future. Wenronbe described “burning goals” in her memory, and Serena shared how she develops “a mental plan” when encountering resistant families in her clinical work:

For example, if one of my challenges is working with resistance, then I'm thinking about which of the clients I have right at this moment who are resistant and what their resistance looks like, and what kinds of things I can do to get through that resistance. And then, where is the resistance? Is my challenge with their resistance because of them or is it because of something within me? And then, I just have a mental plan. So it helps me mentally come up with a plan for clients as to what I'm going to do to meet this resistance.

*Utilizing deadlines.* A number of participants interviewed elaborated on deadlines for task accomplishment, especially surrounding paperwork completion. The findings reveal that timelines that employees place for themselves are significant as they help employees around planning and serve as a reminder for accomplishing a task. As Queen Esther noted, “I actually in my planner have the last names and then I put a date that the case was opened. But, you know how some people set their watch ahead of time - I set my report date ahead of time to be able to do that.” Laufey also noted that having deadlines actually produces some anxiety for her; however, having anxiety also mobilizes her to accomplish tasks on time.

#### *Implementing TPC Based Feedback*

In implementing feedback, the accountability to self, along with accountability to clients appears to be significant catalysts for performance improvement. Further, employees receive feedback from peers and supervisor on an on-going basis, thus goal implementation and experiences of feedback are intertwined. In implementation phase, the most common challenge and a recurring goal appeared to be the completion of clinical documentation in a timely manner. The interview data and the employee development plans suggest that participants are improving performance as evidenced by accomplishment of goals identified in their developmental plans.

*Accountability to self and client families.* Most participants interviewed described accountability to self intertwined with the accountability to client families that they serve, as for them being accountable to themselves means doing the best to provide quality services and help families in the community. Most participants interviewed shared that their accountability to themselves actually supercedes accountability to their teams, or accountability to their supervisor. Serena shared how she wants to perform her best,

I need for me to do a good job, and so therefore, I'm very accountable. Where I fall short, I know that I do, and I'm honest about it, and I don't make excuses. I need to do a good job, not only for the company but for me. I need to do a good job for me, as well as for the clients that we serve.

*Clinical documentation completion as an on-going challenge.* The recurring pattern among all participants was a challenge of implementing the goal and improving performance of clinical documentation completion in timely manner. Only two more senior employees--Hattie and Wenronbe--identified clinical paperwork completion as their strength, and review of their developmental plans supported their statements. The rest of the employees expressed the clinical paperwork completion as performance challenge. The analysis of employees' developmental plans has shown that for most employees this performance challenge is ongoing for at least 2-3 years. In my exploration with participants about the barriers of actually implementing timely paperwork completion, the participants noted the lack of effective organization and procrastination.

*Performing job tasks better following TPC evaluation.* Participants identified specific job tasks that have been improved following TPC evaluation. Reviews of employees' developmental plans have supported their reports. For instance, at her 90-day evaluation, Laufey had a challenge identified by team members as "chairing team meetings". She did not have that same challenge at the on-year evaluation indicating that she had improved her team leadership skills. Julie, for example, at her 90-day evaluation had a challenge of meeting her productivity standards. She did attain her goal before her first-year evaluation. Wenronbe in her developmental plan written in 1998 had a goal of increasing clinical skills working with sexual offenders. Not only did she increase that skill, she became a co-facilitator of a sexual abuse treatment group. As she notes, "It was very difficult because I felt like it's worse enough you hurt a child, but to hurt your own child... And so they [team members] were confronting me on that, because I would always avoid getting cases that involved sex offenders. But, believe it, now I'm the co-facilitator of the sex offender treatment group and working on my license".

*Ongoing feedback.* All participants identified that implementing the goals is an intertwined process with receiving ongoing feedback from peers and supervisor. During weekly team meetings participants share their cases and receive clinical strategies on how to approach families. Also, they meet with their supervisor weekly, and also seek consultation as needed. As Laufey noted, "We are always talking about it and we're always talking about our collateral relationships and the four different areas of clinical service and what could be considered strengths and challenges..." Thus, TPC based evaluation an on-going process.

### **Summary, Recommendations, and Contribution to HRD**

The study has identified the process of how employees learn from TPC based employee evaluation to improve their job performance. Conclusively, the findings have shown that the evaluation process is anxiety producing for most employees, specifically the process of peer evaluation in a team. Preparation was found to be an important phase of TPC evaluation as employees identified the importance of adhering to the individual meeting before the team evaluation. This finding is supported by several literature sources, such as Pfau and Kay (2000), and Atwater and Waldman (1998) who believe preparation to be important in multirater evaluations. Non-adherence to this component has potential for conflict as the findings of the study demonstrated. Overall, the positive feedback delivered in a team setting makes team members feel appreciated and acknowledged. Seniority has been perceived by most study participants as having more weight on feedback received and taken into consideration. The study participants referred to (a) honesty providing feedback and (b) openness to hearing challenges as to significant prerequisites to TPC evaluation process. The perceived effectiveness of TPC employee evaluation relates to the level of honesty: the more honest the feedback giver is, and the more open the feedback receiver is, the more effective evaluation would be to employee's professional development. McCarthy and Garavan (2001) would agree that user acceptance is an important prerequisite to effective peer evaluation. Further, the employees perceive TPC feedback, provided in a face-to-face setting as honest and open as a confidential and anonymous feedback would be. This finding is significant as it contradicts some literature sources (Edwards & Ewen, 1996; Dyer, 2001; London & Beatty, 1993) indicating that only confidential and anonymous peer feedback would be representative of true peer perceptions. In this case study, feedback providers described their feedback delivered in a face-to-face manner to be candid and genuinely reflective of their true perceptions. However, as the study is qualitative, and the findings can not be directly transferred to different settings, that means that the same level of honesty may not be achieved in another setting by simply switching evaluation from a confidential and anonymous format to an open, face-to-face format. Regardless, this finding is significant as it suggests that in team tailored organizational culture the face-to-face peer feedback can be candid and honest. Finally, IFCS applies TPC based evaluation not only for developmental but also for administrative purposes. All the participants thought that if evaluation were delivered only for developmental purposes, it would not impact the level of honesty of feedback given by peers. Again, it is significant as it contradicts a belief in a multirater evaluations' literature (Edwards & Ewen, 1996; Polack & Polack, 1996) that advise using peer feedback for developmental purposes, and not for administrative.

In planning phase, employees strive to develop goals for themselves that are meaningful, acknowledging that their supervisor has the most guidance power in the process. Literature sources also supports this finding and emphasizes the importance of the development of action plans as soon as feedback is received (Polack and Polack, 1996; Pfau and Kay, 2002). Also, the study found that the catalyst for feedback implementation stems from one's accountability to self and the client. Overall, the participants have identified numerous developmental goals that they have attained during their employment with IFCS, which was supported by their developmental plans. It also does not claim that TPC based evaluation is the only factor in facilitating job performance. Recommendations:

1. The study results indicate that employees assign greater value to feedback provided by more senior team members. Therefore, IFCS should continue developing the TPC based culture with an emphasis on integrating newer employees into the evaluation process faster.

2. The change of evaluation format in 2004 appears to not be well accepted by many employees, especially the senior ones. Thus, it is recommended that the current evaluation format be modified to include a more holistic piece, where more emphasis is placed on informal employee relationships, and general characteristics and traits.

3. The completion of paperwork appears to be an on-going challenge of most employees, while they improve their performance in other areas. Thus, IFCS it is recommended that IFCS address this finding by investigating and addressing the personal and structural barriers to that aspect of work.

4. The findings suggest that overall, TPC based employee evaluation facilitates performance improvement for employees. Therefore, this finding can inform the organizations that consider applying face-to-face peer feedback in a team setting. However, the implementation of such kind of employee evaluation should be carried out with caution as the findings of this study were based on one organization that has been applying team approach for 18 years.

The study is significant to work organizations as it highlights a form of multirater evaluation that is not widely practiced in organizations but has the potential for organizations with a team structure. The theoretical significance of the study is its contribution to the literature on employee evaluation involving face-to-face team approach. The study demonstrated that TPC based employee evaluation plays a positive role in facilitating performance improvement. However, the study did not determine if TPC employee evaluation is more or less effective in facilitating employee performance than other forms of employee evaluation. Thus, we would suggest for future research to conduct a comparative study where the effectiveness of different types of evaluations would be compared. Further, the findings showed that TPC feedback is perceived by employees as honest as feedback handled in a confidential way. We would suggest for organizations that apply employee evaluations using teams, to conduct an experimental study, where some employees would provide each other with confidential feedback while other employees would provide each other with an open feedback. The goal of such study would be to quantifiable test the findings of this study. Finally, the study identified that accountability to self and to clients is a significant catalyst driving the performance improvement. Thus, we suggest that future studies look into “self-accountability” and “accountability to clients/ customers” from a more in-depth perspective to determine its role in job performance.

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